

PREVENTION, PROTECTION, PROSECUTION AND  
PARTNERSHIP

ANNUAL REPORT OF THE  
MINISTERIAL TASK FORCE ON  
TRAFFICKING IN PERSONS  
2016



**Government of Guyana**

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Ministerial Task Force on Trafficking in Persons

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## FOREWORD

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It is a privilege and an honour to lead the Ministerial Task Force on Trafficking in Persons, which is the body entrusted with leading the fight against the crime of trafficking in persons in Guyana on behalf of the Government.

The Task Force is an Inter-Agency Body which depends on effective and efficient cooperation between Governmental and Non-Governmental Agencies in order to achieve its goals. As a Government, we are committed to ensuring that the Task Force operates as efficiently as possible.



In January 2016, the Ministerial Task Force on Trafficking in Persons was reconvened and embarked on a year of activities geared at laying the foundation for future efforts to fight trafficking in persons in Guyana. In this regard, particular focus was placed on Sensitization and Training, which has resulted in more reports being received through the Trafficking in Persons Hotline as well as both Government Agents and Non-Governmental representatives throughout the regions, including interior and hinterland areas, becoming more knowledgeable and skilled in detecting the crime and referring cases.

Capacity building is of utmost importance in this effort to curb a crime which threatens to disrupt the values of a society and the development of an economy. Significant strides have been made in this regard and it is intended for the gains made to be advanced in the coming reporting period.

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It is important that Government Agents along with all other citizens of Guyana understand that trafficking in persons is modern day slavery and that today's injustices must be treated with the same scorn as those of yesteryear. Therefore, we cannot continue to be accommodating to this type of practice and comfortable in a world where the perpetration of this despicable crime is commonplace. We all have a responsibility to understand what this crime entails, to be able to recognize the signs, to be observant, and to report suspicious cases to the authorities. Silence is violence!

This 2016 Report intends to give the public a view of the prevalence of trafficking in persons in Guyana, the nature of crime, and what is being done by the Task Force and other supporting Agencies to prevent and respond to it. Actions taken in the 2016 period will be consolidated by the implementation of initiatives in accordance with the National Plan of Action for the Prevention and Response to Trafficking in Persons which covers the period from 2017-2018.

The Ministerial Task Force on Trafficking in Persons intends for its Annual Reports to present the increasing efforts on the part of the Government of Guyana to combat the crime and also to document increasing success in achieving its goals, illustrated by increased victim support mechanisms, training and awareness, reports, successful investigations and prosecutions and, eventually, decreased incidence of the crime due to the creation of an environment whereby there is a high degree of risk for traffickers to operate in the country. It is also our goal for our efforts to be reflected by an elevation to Tier 1, the highest possible tier in the United States Trafficking in Persons Report, which would be an improvement on our recent elevation from Tier 2 Watchlist to Tier 2.

In this regard, I would like to take this opportunity to extend gratitude to the individuals representing their respective Agencies on the Task Force and others for their hard work and dedicated support to the Task Force in 2016. I charge all to stay diligent as we look to help save lives.

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We look forward to continued collaboration and to forging new partnerships, all with the overall aim of successfully tackling and halting the crime of trafficking in persons in Guyana.

Khemraj Ramjattan, M.P.

Vice President and Minister of Public Security &

Chairman of the Ministerial Task Force on Trafficking in Persons

STOP TIP!

## INTRODUCTION

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This document seeks to provide an overview of the Government of Guyana's efforts to combat trafficking in persons in 2016. The Government's efforts to counter the scourge are implemented and monitored by the Ministerial Task Force on Trafficking in Persons.

The 2016 Trafficking in Persons Report specifically focuses on the scope of the initiatives implemented by the Government geared at **preventing** the occurrence of trafficking in persons, **protecting** alleged and prospective victims of the scourge, **prosecuting** suspected offenders and ensuring that these three objectives were met through a healthy and effective **partnership** among stakeholders in the calendar year. This '**Prevention, Protection, Prosecution and Partnership**' form the **four 'P'** paradigm for Guyana's efforts to combat trafficking in persons, in keeping with international best practices.

Trafficking in persons, otherwise known as 'human trafficking' or 'modern day slavery', is a global concern and it affects males and females, young and old and people from all walks of life. The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) Global Report on Trafficking in Persons 2016 stated: "A total of 63,251 victims were detected in 106 countries and territories between 2012 and 2014". These figures show that trafficking in persons is a far reaching crime that needs to be addressed on a global scale.

Therefore, the implementation of programmes geared at prevention of the crime is necessary in order to sensitize prospective victims and dissuade would-be offenders. By the same token, robust measures must be set in place to respond to the crime in the best interest of the victims and survivors and to ensure that punishment meted out to perpetrators is commensurate with the offence committed.

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In this regard, many international organizations – including the United Nations, the Organization of American States, INTERPOL and the International Organization for Migration – have crafted programmes aimed at combating trafficking in persons and have published periodic Reports on the matter. The United States of America also publishes an annual Global Report, on which it ranks countries on different tiers depending on the quantity and quality of countries’ efforts to combat trafficking in persons in comparison with international standards.

In the most recent United States Trafficking in Persons Report, Guyana was elevated from the Tier 2 Watchlist to Tier 2, with the Report stating that Guyana did “not fully meet the minimum standards for the elimination of trafficking; however, it is making significant efforts to do so.”

The Government of Guyana takes these Tier Placements seriously and desires for Guyana to be placed on Tier 1 in the near future, which would require increased efforts and concrete results. The 2017-2018 National Plan of Action for the Prevention and Response to Trafficking in Persons released in January, 2017 is an important stepping stone in this regard and this, the 2016 Report, highlights the foundational activities carried out in the lead up to its implementation.

The 2016 Trafficking in Persons Report will show that Government Authorities and supporting entities are aware of the problem and are working to combat it but will also demonstrate that there is a lot of work still to be done.

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## INSTITUTIONAL AND LEGAL FRAMEWORK

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In 2004, Guyana ratified the United Nations' Convention against Transnational Organized Crime (UNTOC) and its supplementary Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children, known as the Palermo Protocol.

This gave rise to the passing of Guyana's Combating of Trafficking in Persons Act No. 2 of 2005 in the National Assembly. The Act defines trafficking in persons as "the recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring or receipt of persons by means of threat or use of force or other means of coercion, or by abduction, fraud, deception, abuse of power or a position of vulnerability, or by the giving or receiving of payments or benefits to achieve the consent of a person having control over another person, for the purpose of exploitation."

The Combating of Trafficking in Persons Act No. 2 of 2005 prohibits all forms of trafficking in persons and prescribes sufficiently stringent penalties, ranging from three years to life imprisonment along with forfeiture of property for offenders and full restitution for victims.

In accordance with Part V, Section 30 (1) of the aforementioned Act, Guyana established a Ministerial Task Force on Trafficking in Persons on February 6, 2007. The Task Force was created to facilitate the planning, implementation, and monitoring and evaluation of national strategies in response to trafficking in persons. It allows for information sharing, the coordination of roles, and has been instrumental in avoiding overlap of activities or gaps in the national response to trafficking in persons. The First Annual Trafficking in Persons Report was released in 2008.

The Official Chairman for the Ministerial Task Force on Trafficking in Persons is the Honourable Vice President and Minister of Public Security, Mr. Khemraj Ramjattan, MP.



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The Task Force consists of a Ministerial Arm and a Technical Arm. The Chairman leads meetings of the Ministerial Arm, which are held periodically, whereas monthly meetings of the Technical Arm are led by the Task Force Coordinator. Meetings are geared at planning specific activities of the Task Force, which are designed to meet the targets set out in the Action Plan.

The Ministerial Task Force on Trafficking in Persons is comprised of a number of Governmental and Non-Governmental Organizations, which can be seen as follows:

LEAD AGENCY

- Ministry of Public Security – Serves as the Secretariat of the Task Force

OTHER MEMBER AGENCIES

- Ministry of Social Protection
- Attorney General’s Chambers and Ministry of Legal Affairs
- Ministry of Foreign Affairs
- Ministry of Indigenous Peoples’ Affairs
- Ministry of Communities
- Ministry of Natural Resources
- Ministry of Education
- Guyana Geology and Mines Commission
- Guyana Police Force, Criminal Investigation Department
- Guyana Police Force, Central Immigration and Passport Office
- Chambers of the Director of Public Prosecutions
- The Indigenous Peoples’ Commission
- Food for the Poor
- Help and Shelter
- Guyana Women Miners Organization

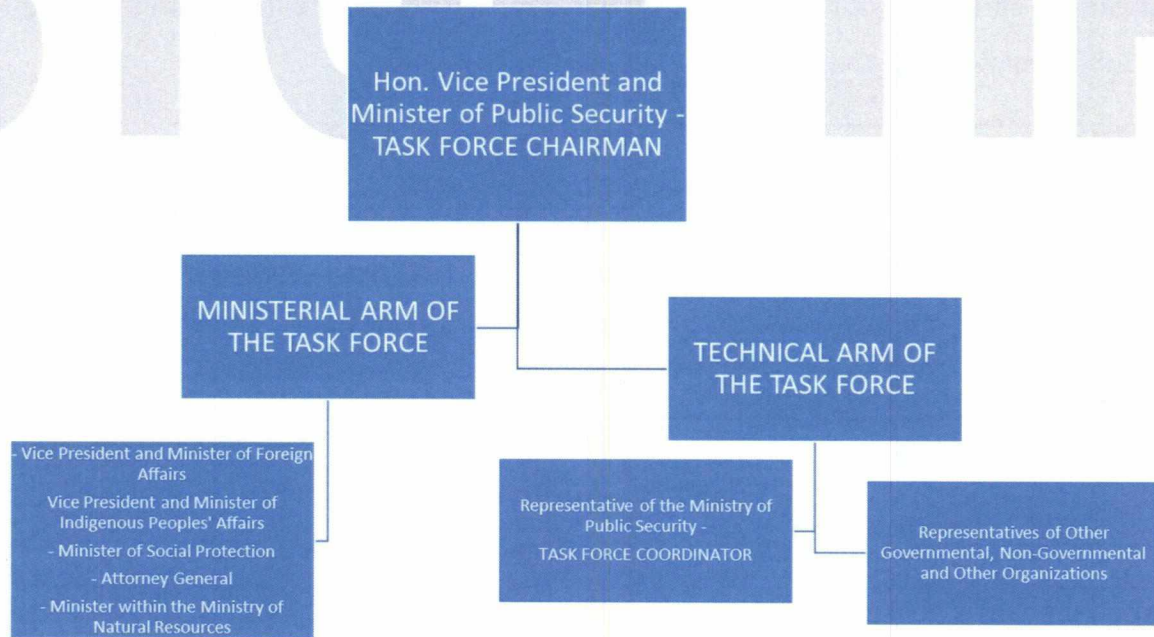
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HONORARY MEMBER

- Burn the Price Tag – Student Group

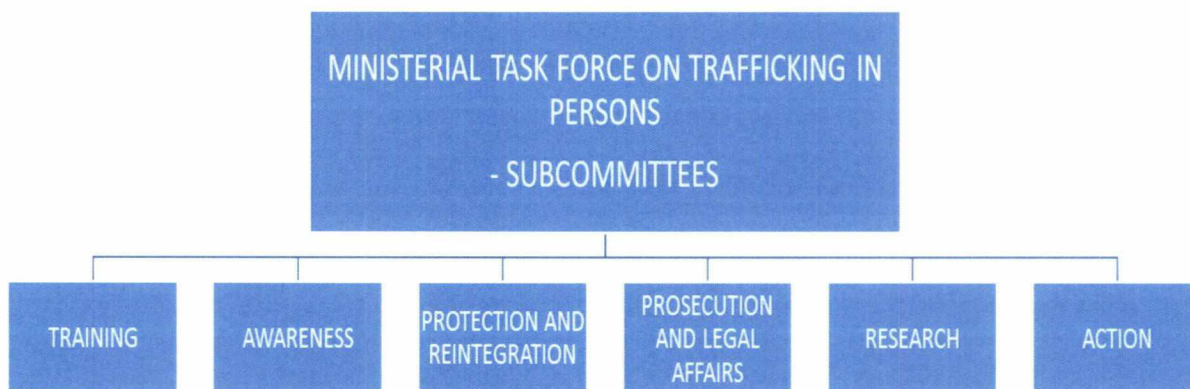
Each Agency on the Task Force is represented by an individual who is regarded as a Focal Point person to assist in expediting inter-agency cooperation. This individual is expected to provide assistance in matters related to trafficking in persons in accordance with the mandate and abilities of the represented Agency.

An operational 24/7 Trafficking in Persons Hotline Number – **227-4083** - managed by the Counter-Trafficking in Persons Unit of the Ministry of Social Protection is the Government's primary medium through which reports of suspected cases of trafficking in persons are received. However, reports can also be made to the nearest Police Station, Toshao or to any of the Agencies represented on the Task Force.



Institutional Structure of the Ministerial Task Force on Trafficking in Persons

## MEET THE SUBCOMMITTEES



Upon the reconvening of the Ministerial Task Force on Trafficking in Persons, the decision was taken to have the Task Force separated in Sub-Committees in order to facilitate an increase in the efficiency with which the Task Force carried out its activities. A brief outline of the Sub-Committees of the Task Force can be seen as follows:

<b>SUBCOMMITTEE</b>	<b>RESPONSIBILITY</b>
Training	To develop, coordinate, facilitate and support training programmes for trafficking in persons' stakeholders in Guyana.
Awareness	To lead the Task Force's programme on sensitization and awareness on trafficking in persons for the general public.
Protection and Reintegration	To lead the Task Force's efforts in supporting the Counter-Trafficking in Persons Unit, Ministry of Social Protection and the relevant Non-Governmental Organizations in their provision of

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	assistance to victims of trafficking in persons and in ensuring their safety and successful reintegration into society.
Prosecution and Legal Issues	To advise the Task Force on matters related to trafficking in persons' investigation, prosecution and legislation/legal documents.
Research	To research trends, new relevant information both internationally and locally, and public opinion regarding trafficking in persons in Guyana to assist the other Sub-Committees in carrying out their objectives.
Action	To assist the Guyana Police Force, Ministry of Social Protection and Guyana Geology and Mines Commission in the conducting of investigations, surveillance, surprise inspections, establishment raids and rescue missions.

## THE FOUR 'P's: PREVENTION

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In order to effectively combat the crime of trafficking in persons, it is imperative that Authorities make considerable efforts to stop the crime from occurring in the first place. In this regard, the Government of Guyana has conducted and supported a plethora of training and sensitization activities aimed at ensuring that the general public is increasingly aware and that the Agents responsible for administering information and awareness materials are well skilled.

The Awareness Sub-Committee of the Task Force, the Counter-Trafficking in Persons Unit of the Ministry of Social Protection and the Guyana Geology and Mines Commission led local efforts to sensitize the general public and other stakeholders. In each activity, focus was placed on ensuring that participants were made aware of the TIP Hotline Number - 227-4083. Key activities conducted in this regard are outlined as follows:

➤ **Awareness Session at the Ruimveldt Children's Aid Centre – March, 2016**

A team from the Awareness Sub-Committee of the Task Force visited the Ruimveldt Children's Aid Centre to deliver a presentation on trafficking in persons to children who received care at this location. It was noted that internationally, children in foster care and similar situations tended to be at high risk for sexual abuse at some point in their lives. In this regard, the Task Force saw it fit to address the youths there and it became a fruitful session with vibrant participation from the children and kind support from the resident facilitators.

➤ **Market Walkthrough Awareness in Bartica – April, 2016**

During a visit to Guyana by a team from INTERPOL, members of the Task Force's Awareness Sub-Committee, supported by INTERPOL and the Guyana Police Force,

conducted Awareness in Bartica Market distributing brochures and flyers, erecting posters and having short discussions on trafficking in persons with persons in the area in the process.

➤ **Week of Activities to Commemorate World Day Against Trafficking in Persons – July 24-30, 2016**

The Ministerial Task Force on Trafficking in Persons and the Counter-Trafficking in Persons Unit at the Ministry of Social Protection commemorated World Day Against Trafficking in Persons on July 30 as instituted by the United Nations. In this regard, a Week of Activities was held beginning on July 24 and ending on July 30, 2016.

The Week of Activities commenced with a visit to Region 1 by a team from the Counter-Trafficking in Persons Unit, Ministry of Social Protection for trafficking in persons' awareness activities and a Candlelight Vigil for victims of the crime.

Task Force members then facilitated trafficking in persons Documentary Viewings and Discussions with the Ministry of Public Security and the Amerindian Hostel in Georgetown while there was also a sensitization activity conducted with the staff of Food for the Poor.

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**Trafficking in Persons Documentary Viewing and Discussion with staff of the Ministry of Public Security**

The Week of Activities continued with Market Walkthrough Awareness Sessions at Stabroek, Bourda and Rosehall Markets. Task Force teams held short discussions on the topic of trafficking in persons with market vendors and patrons while also distributing brochures and mounting posters on the walls of stalls and other suitable surfaces. The Task Force team on the Bourda Market Walkthrough was joined by the Hon. Vice President, Minister of Public Security and Chairman of the Task Force, Mr. Khemraj Ramjattan, MP.



**Vice President, Minister of Public Security and Task Force Chairman, Mr. Khemraj Ramjattan, MP leading the Trafficking in Persons Awareness Walkthrough in Bourda Market, Georgetown**

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The Week of Activities culminated with a Trafficking in Persons Walk and subsequent programme on World Day Against Trafficking in Persons on Saturday, July 30, 2016. One hundred and thirty-seven (137) individuals, including Hon. Vice President, Minister of Public Security and Task Force Chairman, Mr. Khemraj Ramjattan, MP; Hon. Minister of Public Health (then Minister of Social Protection), Ms. Volda Lawrence, MP; Hon. Minister within the Ministry of Natural Resources, Ms. Simona Broomes, MP; and His Excellency United States Ambassador to Guyana, Mr. Perry Holloway, participated in the activity.

The Walk commenced at the Promenade Gardens, Middle Street Entrance, Georgetown and concluded at Jubilee Park, between Hadfield Street and Mandela Avenue, Georgetown where the short Programme was held. In addition to remarks given by each of the aforementioned dignitaries, there was a song performed by Nicasey Gordon Abrams titled 'I am not your Slave' and a poem performed by Jaime 'SuRu' Mayers titled 'P.D.F. (Painfully Disturbing Facts) on Trafficking in Persons'.

This Activity was made possible due to the kind contributions of the Guyana Geology and Mines Commission, Banks DIH Ltd., Ministry of Communities, Ministry of Indigenous Peoples' Affairs, Guyana Police Force, Community Policing and Ministry of Public Security.



**Trafficking in Persons Walk to Commemorate World Day against Trafficking in Persons -  
July 30, 2016**



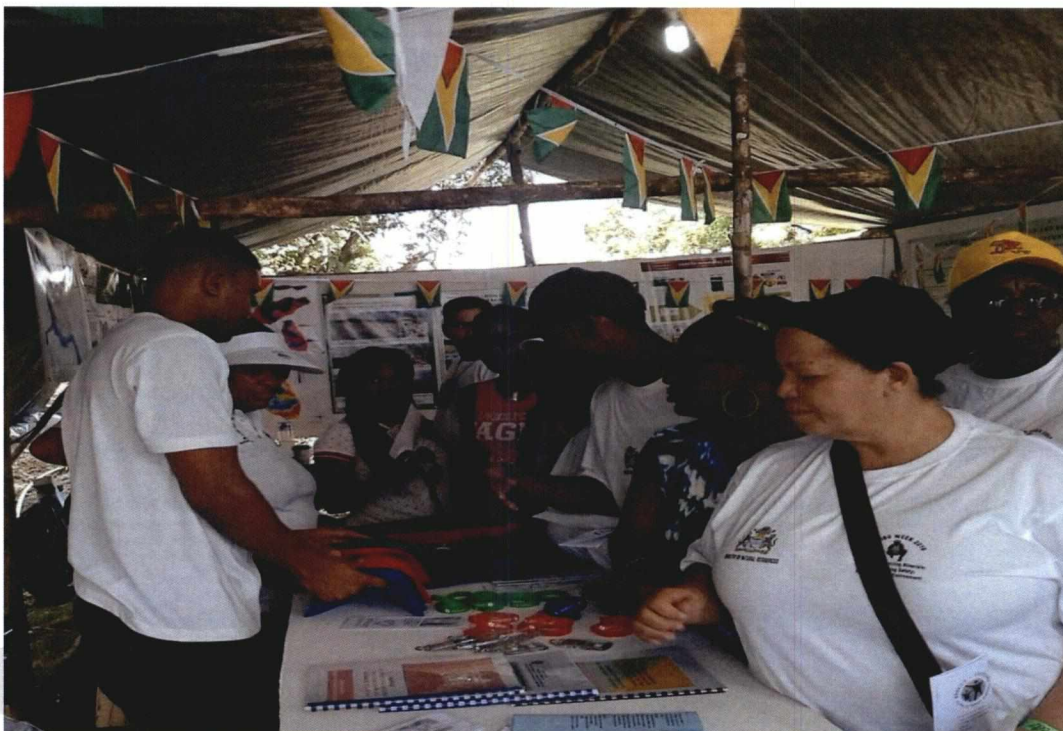


**Head Table comprised of Dignitaries at the Jubilee Park Ceremony held at the conclusion of the Trafficking in Persons Walk**

➤ **Awareness during Mining Week – August 21-27, 2016**

During Mining Week, the Guyana Geology and Mines Commission with the support of the Awareness Sub-Committee of the Ministerial Task Force on Trafficking in Persons set up booths designed for trafficking in persons sensitization at the Arthur Chung Convention Centre, Turkeyen during the Mining Exhibition at the beginning of the week and at Bartica, Region 7 during Pork Knocker's Day celebrations.

The booth at the Mining Exhibition was equipped with a television displaying the movie 'Human Trafficking' along with other related content. Both booths contained a plethora of trafficking in persons' awareness materials and novelties which were distributed to visitors, including brochures, flyers, keyrings, bags, arm bands, water bottles and umbrellas.



Trafficking in Persons Awareness Booth at Pork Knockers Day Exhibition, Bartica, Region 7 as part of Mining Week 2016

➤ **Seawall Sensitization**

On two (2) separate Sunday evenings, Task Force Awareness Sub-Committee teams visited the seawall between Vlissengen Road and Camp Street, Georgetown to spread awareness on trafficking in persons. There was a generally positive reception from seawall goers, who mostly displayed a general understanding of the issue. The Task Force team was able to clear up any misconceptions which existed while distributing brochures, keyrings and other novelties.

➤ **Awareness at Joshua House Children's Home – September, 2016**

The kind facilitators at Joshua House Children's Home welcomed a team from the Task Force's Awareness Sub-Committee for a discussion with children in their care. The one (1) hour session saw the team from the Task Force explain the crime of trafficking in persons, share information on the services available, warn participants of the associated dangers

and accept feedback before circulating brochures and water bottles bearing anti-trafficking in persons slogans.

➤ **Awareness at GUYEXPO 2016**

The Guyana Geology and Mines Commission welcomed members of the Task Force's Awareness Sub-Committee to share its booth at GUYEXPO 2016 for the purpose of trafficking in persons' sensitization. On each of the four (4) nights, Task Force representatives joined the Guyana Geology and Mines at the National Exhibition Centre in Sophia in engaging passers-by on the topic of trafficking in persons and distributing awareness materials such as brochures, flyers, keyrings, armbands, hats, bags and bumper stickers bearing anti-trafficking in persons slogans and messages along with the TIP hotline number.

➤ **Other Awareness Activities**

Additionally, the Ministry of Indigenous Peoples' Affairs ensured that Brochures were distributed at the Meeting of the National Toshao's Council held from August 22-27, 2016 at the Arthur Chung Convention Centre, Turkeyen.

The Counter-Trafficking in Persons Unit of the Ministry of Social Protection also held Awareness Sessions in Region 8 and presented at a one (1) day sensitization session for thirty-five (35) members of the United States Embassy's – Youth Action Network (YAN) prior to commemorating International Day Against the Abolition of Slavery on December 2, 2016 with an Awareness Drive. This Drive saw the Unit, with support from the Awareness Sub-Committee of the Task Force, drape material on lantern posts at strategic points in Georgetown which bore the message: 'LOOK OUT! SPEAK UP! TAKE DOWN!; ACT AGAINST MODERN DAY SLAVERY (HUMAN TRAFFICKING) NOW!; HOTLINE: 227-4083'.



**Awareness to Commemorate International Day Against the Abolition of Slavery**

The Counter-Trafficking in Persons Unit of the Ministry of Social Protection also oversaw a Local Training Course for ninety-nine (99) Trafficking in Persons Stakeholders including representatives from the International Organization for Migration (IOM), Non-Governmental Organizations, the Task Force along with Trafficking in Persons Officers, Social Workers and Probation Officers. The Training Course was facilitated by the International Organization for Migration and co-coordinated with the United States Embassy.

'Burn the Price Tag' led a Trafficking in Persons Awareness Walk in January, 2016 with support from the Ministry of Social Protection and also conducted informative assemblies with the students of Queen's College at each level.

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Burn the Price Tag Trafficking in Persons Walk – January, 2016

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## THE FOUR 'P's: PROTECTION

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Victim Protection is another very important aspect of any Government's programme to combat trafficking in persons. This Protection needs to cater to the specific needs of the alleged victim or survivor of trafficking in persons in order to be especially effective.

In 2016, it was noted that groups who appeared to be more vulnerable than others to being victimized for trafficking in persons included:

- Female Non-Nationals
- Young men and women from hinterland communities
- Workers seeking better jobs outside of Guyana (or other origin country)
- Domestic Workers
- Sex Workers/Exotic Dancers
- Undereducated youths
- Children from dysfunctional families

In 2016, the Government of Guyana through the Ministry of Social Protection provided various services/assistance to both foreign and domestic victims and survivors of trafficking in persons. These services included:

- Information on Victim Rights
- Counselling and guidance
- Access to medical services
- Legal services
- Shelter
- Food
- Clothing
- Translation (where necessary)
- Access to educational and training opportunities – scholarships

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- Access to employment opportunities
- Repatriation and reintegration services

Significant efforts were made by the Ministry of Social Protection, the Guyana Police Force and Non-Governmental Organizations to ensure the safety of all victims as they were either placed in a safe house or reintegrated with their families as the situation demanded. There was a consent form that needed to be signed by adult victims before they were accommodated in a safe home. Child victims were placed based on individualized care plans and risk assessments. Based on the results of these assessments, child victims were either reintegrated with family members, placed into foster/kinship care, or placed into safe homes that were in keeping with Minimum Standards of Operations for Children Homes. The confidentiality of the alleged victims of trafficking in persons was respected and protected and full consideration was also given to their safety.

The Counter-Trafficking in Persons Unit of the Ministry of Social Protection functioned as victim advocates to ensure that their rights were upheld; liaison between the identified victims and Investigators; and a support body for other investigative and judicial processes.

Alleged victims and survivors of trafficking in persons received shelter from five (5) homes – two (2) State-supervised homes facilitated by Non-Governmental Organizations and three (3) State-operated children’s homes. Shelter was provided to thirty-two (32) survivors and alleged victims of trafficking in persons in 2016.

The Government of Guyana through the Ministry of Social Protection provided approximately GY\$2,000,000 in direct assistance to victims and survivors of trafficking in persons. The Ministry of Social Protection also subsidized the operations of one of the NGO managed Shelters in the sum of GY\$10,000,000.

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Portions of the training and sensitization sessions that were conducted were geared at Victim Identification and Referral and reducing the stigma attached to alleged victims and survivors of trafficking in persons by ensuring that participants gained an appreciation of what a victim of such a crime would be forced to endure. Participants were also made to understand that although victims might have participated in a crime they were not to be treated as perpetrators.

Specifically, five (5) Police Officers received regional training from INTERPOL in Victim Identification, Referral and Assistance and returned to Guyana to pass this information onto thirteen (13) other Police Officers from the Major Crimes Unit, Criminal Investigations Department in a two-day Training Course organized and facilitated by the Guyana Police Force, with the support of the Training Sub-Committee of the Task Force; and to thirty-seven (37) local Frontline Officials as part of a two-day Trafficking in Persons Training Course organized and facilitated by the Training Sub-Committee of the Task Force.



## THE FOUR 'P's: PROSECUTION

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As stated earlier in this Report, the Combating of Trafficking in Persons Act No. 2 of 2005 defines trafficking in persons as “the recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring or receipt of persons **by means of threat or use of force or other means of coercion, or by abduction, fraud, deception, abuse of power or a position of vulnerability, or by the giving or receiving of payments or benefits to achieve the consent of a person having control over another person,** for the purpose of exploitation.”

However, in the case of children – individuals under the age of eighteen (18) years – the bolded area in the definition above would not be a necessary element to establish an occurrence of the crime.

The year 2016 saw the Government of Guyana make extensive efforts to improve investigation and prosecution of trafficking in persons in Guyana, especially in the area of capacity building.

The Prosecution and Legal Issues Sub-Committee of the Task Force provided with Task Force with legal advice and required information while also participating in capacity building activities.

One landmark activity in 2016 was a visit by a team from INTERPOL supported by the Royal Canadian Mounted Police from April 9-13, 2016 for a Trafficking in Persons Needs Assessment as part of a Regional Project to Combat Human Trafficking and Migrant Smuggling. This visit saw the INTERPOL team join a group from the Ministerial Task Force on Trafficking in Persons and the Guyana Police Force in traveling to Bartica, Itaballi and Puruni in Region 7 to experience the issues faced by local authorities in combating the crime and determine training needs.



**INTERPOL TRAFFICKING IN PERSONS NEEDS ASSESSMENT VISIT TO GUYANA – Picture of INTERPOL Team with Task Force Members and Police Officers**

This led to a series of regional training sessions for members of the Guyana Police Force – Investigative and Immigration Officers and Police Prosecutors. The specific Training Courses held under the INTERPOL intervention were as follows:

- Five (5) day Overseas Training of five (5) Police and Immigration Officers on ‘Victim Identification, Referral and Assistance’.
- Four (4) day Overseas Training of three (3) Police Prosecutors titled ‘Human Trafficking Training for Legal Authorities’.
- Five (5) day Overseas Training of five (5) Police Investigators titled ‘Investigative Skills Training for Human Trafficking Investigators Part 1’.



**Participants from the Guyana Police Force – Criminal Investigation and Immigration Departments in Training Course on Trafficking in Persons ‘Victim Identification and Referral’ held in Trinidad and Tobago**

Officers receiving Training in the aforementioned courses were then enlisted by the Guyana Police Force and the Training Sub-Committee of the Ministerial Task Force on Trafficking in Persons to relay the information gained in the following local Training Courses, also held in 2016:

- Two (2) day Training on different aspects of trafficking in persons (including local legislation training by the Task Force Prosecution and Legal Issues Sub-Committee representative from the Chambers of the Director of Public Prosecutions) for thirteen (13) Officers of the Guyana Police Force – Criminal Investigations Department, Major Crimes Unit conducted by the Guyana Police Force with support from the Training Sub-Committee of the Ministerial Task Force on Trafficking in Persons (including NGOs).

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- Two (2) day ‘Trafficking in Persons Training Course for Frontline Officials’ which saw the participation of thirty-seven (37) individuals from various regions representing Guyana Geology and Mines Commission, Guyana Police Force – Criminal Investigation and Immigration Departments, Guyana Defence Force, Community Policing, Ministry of Social Protection, Ministry of Public Security and Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The Training Course was conducted by the Ministerial Task Force on Trafficking in Persons with special support from the Guyana Geology and Mines Commission and the kind compliments of the Guyana Police Force Officers’ Training Centre.



**Participants in the ‘Trafficking in Persons Training Course for Frontline Officials’ held at the Guyana Police Force Officers’ Training Centre**

There was also a two (2) day local Training Exercise conducted by the Ministry of Natural Resources for the benefit of twelve (12) Mines Officers from the Guyana Geology and Mines Commission.

### Trafficking in Persons Cases in 2016

For the year 2016, there were ninety-eight (98) alleged victims of trafficking in persons stemming from thirty-eight (38) reported cases. In contrast, there were eighteen (18) reported cases in 2015 and also eighteen (18) in 2014. Of the thirty-eight (38) in 2016, thirty (30) were sent for legal advice and nineteen (19) trafficking in persons charges were laid as a result. These cases involved fifty-five (55) alleged perpetrators, up from thirty-two (32) in 2015 and twenty-six (26) in 2014.

According to the Combating of Trafficking in Persons Act No. 2 of 2005, individuals found guilty of committing the crime of trafficking persons would be liable to sentences between three (3) years and life imprisonment, to forfeiture of property, and to paying full restitution to the survivor.

In 2016, there was one (1) conviction for a case initiated in the calendar year while there was one (1) other conviction for a case from the previous year. In the first case, the perpetrator, Ms. Joyce Lawrence, was not sentenced to jail time but was ordered to pay G\$884,000 in restitution to the survivor, and was fined G\$50,000. The verdict was appealed by both the State and the perpetrator. In the second case, Ms. Sharlene Oxley was sentenced to three (3) years in jail and ordered to pay G\$2,000,000 in restitution to the survivor. This verdict was appealed by the perpetrator.

Further, it was noted that the profiles of suspected perpetrators were predominantly middle-aged persons who provided entertainment for the public and it was noted that family members of the alleged victim were often involved in the alleged perpetration of the crime – both of the perpetrators convicted in 2016 bore relation to the survivor.

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The following tables display analytical data based on cases considered by the Guyana Police Force from 2014-2016:

**GENDERS OF ALLEGED VICTIMS OF TRAFFICKING IN PERSONS**

GENDERS OF ALLEGED TIP VICTIMS	2014	2015	2016	TOTAL
MALE	5 (12.5%)	3 (5%)	13 (13.3%)	21 (10.7%)
FEMALE	35 (87.5%)	56 (95%)	85 (86.7%)	176 (89.3%)
TOTAL	40	59	98	197

For the years 2014-2016, each year has seen an increase in the number of alleged victims of trafficking in persons in Guyana. It is the contention of the Task Force that much of the increase in reported cases can be attributed to the increase in awareness about among the general populace.

Females dominated reports on trafficking in persons from 2014 to 2016 with 89.3%, while alleged male victims accounted for 10.7%. For each individual year in the 2014-2016 period, females made up over 85% of alleged victims.

“The general trend was a decrease in the prevalence of alleged trafficking in persons as age groups rose, strongly suggesting that younger individuals were most vulnerable to the crime. However, each of the age groups recorded alleged victims, suggesting that no one was immune.”

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**AGE GROUPS FOR ALLEGED VICTIMS OF TRAFFICKING IN PERSONS**

AGE GROUPS FOR ALLEGED TIP VICTIMS	<12	12-18	19-25	26-32	33-39	40-46	47-53	54-60	Total
2014 (%)	0	19 (47.5)	9 (22.5)	9 (22.5)	0	0	1 (2.5)	2 (5)	40
2015 (%)	0	20 (33.9)	21 (35.6)	12 (20.3)	0	5 (8.5)	0	1 (1.7)	59
2016 (%)	1 (1)	32 (32.7)	37 (37.8)	17 (17.3)	5 (5.1)	4 (4.1)	2 (2)	0	98
Total	1 (0.5)	71 (36)	67 (34)	38 (19.3)	5 (2.5)	9 (4.6)	3 (1.5)	3 (1.5)	197

From the above table, it can be seen that according to the returns for alleged victims of trafficking in persons, the most vulnerable age group in Guyana from 2014 to 2016 was the 12-18 age group with 36% followed closely by the 19-25 age group with 34%. Notably, in 2014 the 12-18 age group accounted for more than twice as many alleged victims as the 19-25 age group whereas the latter age group marginally accounted for a higher percentage of alleged victims than the former in 2015 and 2016.

The general trend was a decrease in the prevalence of alleged trafficking in persons as age groups rose, strongly suggesting that younger individuals were most vulnerable to the crime. However, each of the age groups recorded alleged victims, suggesting that no one was immune.

**ETHNICITIES OF ALLEGED VICTIMS OF TRAFFICKING IN PERSONS**

ETHNICITIES OF ALLEGED TIP VICTIMS	2014	2015	2016	TOTAL
INDIGENOUS	8 (20%)	11 (19%)	30 (30.6%)	49 (24.9%)
EAST INDIAN	3 (7.5%)	4 (6.8%)	11 (11.2%)	18 (9.1%)
AFRO-GUYANESE	8 (20%)	9 (15.2%)	10 (10.2%)	27 (13.7%)
MIXED RACE	21 (52.5%)	35 (59%)	47 (48%)	103 (52.3%)
TOTAL	40	59	98	197

The majority of the victims of trafficking in persons in Guyana were of Mixed Race with 52.3% of alleged victims falling in this ethnic group. The Mixed Race group, as recorded in Police statistics, was made up largely of individuals from Latin American countries, such as the Dominican Republic, Brazil or Venezuela. This ethnic group was followed by the Indigenous with 24.9%, Afro-Guyanese with 13.7% and East Indians with 9.1%. There was no significant deviation from this trend in any of the individual years from 2014-2016.

“The majority of incidences of alleged trafficking in persons from 2014-2016 occurred in Region 4 with 44.2%, followed by Region 7 with 22.3%. Other notable locations were Region 8 (9.1%), Region 1 (6.6%) and Caribbean Countries (5.6%).”



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**AREAS WHERE ALLEGED INSTANCES OF TRAFFICKING IN PERSONS HAVE OCCURED**

AREAS WHERE ALLEGED INSTANCES OF TRAFFICKING IN PERSONS HAVE OCCURED	2014 (%)	2015 (%)	2016 (%)	TOTAL (%)
Region 1	6 (15)	-	7 (7.1)	13 (6.6)
Region 2	3 (7.5)	-	3 (3.1)	6 (3)
Region 3	-	-	-	-
Region 4	13 (32.5)	23 (39)	51 (52)	87 (44.2)
Region 5	-	-	-	-
Region 6	-	2 (3.4)	2 (2)	4 (2)
Region 7	6 (15)	28 (47.4)	10 (10.2)	44 (22.3)
Region 8	-	6 (10.2)	12 (12.2)	18 (9.1)
Region 9	3 (7.5)	-	1 (1)	4 (2)
Region 10	-	-	-	-
CARIBBEAN	8 (20)	-	3 (3.1)	11 (5.6)
SOUTH AMERICA (Suriname and French Guiana)	-	-	7 (7.1)	7 (3.6)
OTHER COUNTRIES	-	-	1 (1)	1 (0.5)
UNKNOWN	1 (2.5)	-	1 (1)	2 (1)
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>59</b>	<b>98</b>	<b>197</b>

The majority of incidences of alleged trafficking in persons from 2014-2016 occurred in Region 4 with 44.2%, followed by Region 7 with 22.3%. Other notable locations were Region 8 (9.1%), Region 1 (6.6%) and Caribbean Countries (5.6%).

Region 4 was the area with the most incidences of alleged trafficking in persons in 2014 and 2016, however, in 2015 Region 7 led in this regard with 47.4%.

It should be noted, however, that Region 4 is the most densely populated Region in Guyana with approximately fifteen (15) times the population of Region 7, thirty-one (31) times the population of Region 8 and twelve (12) times the population of Region 1, so this must be

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taken into consideration when comparing Regions with regard to the prevalence of the crime therein.

**AREAS OF ORIGIN FOR ALLEGED VICTIMS OF TRAFFICKING IN PERSONS**

AREAS OF ORIGIN FOR ALLEGED VICTIMS OF TRAFFICKING IN PERSONS	2014 (%)	2015 (%)	2016 (%)	TOTAL (%)
Region 1	5 (12.5)	7 (11.9)	19 (19.4)	31 (15.7)
Region 2	2 (5)	1 (1.7)	4 (4.1)	7 (3.6)
Region 3	3 (7.5)	2 (3.4)	8 (8.2)	13 (6.6)
Region 4	13 (32.5)	9 (15.3)	15 (15.3)	37 (18.8)
Region 5	-	1 (1.7)	2 (2)	3 (1.5)
Region 6	3 (7.5)	3 (5)	2 (2)	8 (4)
Region 7	-	1 (1.7)	-	1 (0.5)
Region 8	2 (5)	1 (1.7)	6 (6.1)	9 (4.6)
Region 9	-	2 (3.4)	4 (4.1)	6 (3)
Region 10	1 (2.5)	-	-	1 (0.5)
CARIBBEAN	-	-	-	-
OTHER COUNTRIES	11 (27.5)	31 (52.5)	38 (38.8) DR – 18 Brazil – 17 Venezuela – 3	80 (40.6)
UNKNOWN	-	1 (1.7)	-	1 (0.5)
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>59</b>	<b>98</b>	<b>197</b>

Interestingly, Police figures indicated that in 2015 the majority of alleged victims of trafficking in persons in Guyana were from overseas with 52.5%. That figure was 38.8% in 2016, mostly represented by individuals from the Dominican Republic and Brazil. The entire 2014-2016 period saw 40.6% of alleged victims originating from overseas.

Guyanese alleged victims from 2014-2016 originated primarily from Region 4 (18.8% of total number of victims), followed closely by Region 1 (15.7%). In 2016, more alleged victims were from Region 1 (19.4%) than Region 4 (15.3%) whereas the converse was true for the preceding two (2) years.

Although Region 7 was the area with the second highest alleged incidence of trafficking in persons, reports suggested that only one (1) of the one hundred and ninety-seven (197) alleged victims in the 2014-2016 period called this Region home.

### Additional Information

The year 2016 saw approximately one thousand eight hundred (1,800) labor inspections conducted by the Ministry of Social Protection. Additionally, thirteen (13) labor inspectors were employed by the Government of Guyana in the period. Labour violators were penalized mainly for failing to pay wages owed and severance pay, failing to grant annual vacation time, and failing to report work site accidents.

A number of surveillance activities, surprise inspections and establishment raids were conducted by the Guyana Police Force, on occasion supported by the Counter-Trafficking in Persons Unit of the Ministry of Social Protection, Guyana Geology and Mines Commission and/or the Action Sub-Committee of the Ministerial Task Force on Trafficking in Persons.

“The entire 2014-2016 period saw 40.6% of alleged victims  
originating from overseas.”

Guyanese alleged victims from 2014-2016 originated  
primarily from Region 4 (18.8% of total number of victims),  
followed closely by Region 1 (15.7%).”

## THE FOUR 'P's: PARTNERSHIP

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'Partnership' was responsible for the success of the preceding three elements of the Four 'P' paradigm for combating trafficking in persons. Effective partnership has been and continues to be necessary for an effective anti-trafficking in persons programme.

In order to streamline existing local partnerships, the Prosecution and Legal Affairs Sub-Committee is crafting a Protocol which would guide Agencies regarding their respective roles, effective and appropriate lines of communication and victim referral procedures.

Partnerships with international organizations and bilateral cooperation have also been crucial to the efforts of the Government of Guyana to prevent the crime of trafficking in persons from occurring, protecting victims and survivors of the crime and prosecuting suspected offenders.

However, the partnership to fight trafficking in persons includes not only Agencies on the Task Force and other organizations connected with this body but every citizen of Guyana. The importance of each and every stakeholder cannot be overstated.

In 2016, many entities recognized their responsibility and stepped forward to lend support to the efforts of the Task Force and, in some cases, put forward and led their own initiatives while enlisting the Task Force's support.

In this regard, the Task Force wishes to extend its gratitude to the each Agency represented on the Task Force for its efforts during the reporting period, and also to the following Agencies, some represented on the Task Force, who would have made extra efforts/contributions to the work of the Government of Guyana to fight this crime thus exemplifying their commitment to the cause:

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- Guyana Police Force
- Counter-Trafficking in Persons Unit, Ministry of Social Protection
- Child Care and Protection Agency, Ministry of Social Protection
- Guyana Geology and Mines Commission
- Chambers of the Director of Public Prosecutions
- Ministry of Indigenous Peoples' Affairs
- Ministry of Communities
- Ministry of Education
- Ministry of Health
- Banks DIH Limited
- Help and Shelter
- Guyana Women Miners Organization
- Food for the Poor
- Indigenous Peoples' Commission
- The Judiciary
- International Organization for Migration
- INTERPOL
- United States Department of State
- United States Embassy
- Burn the Price Tag
- Members of the General Public

With so many stakeholders, and more not mentioned, on board, it is certain that going forward Guyana will be increasingly equipped to combat the crime of trafficking in persons. Thank you sincerely for your kind efforts and contributions.

## OUTLOOK FOR 2017

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The efforts of the Government of Guyana in 2016 will serve as a platform for the activities and initiatives of 2017. Training and Awareness Programmes will be continued and improved upon due to experience gained from implementation in 2016 as it is deemed necessary for the gains made in capacity building and information sharing to be advanced.

Improvements in the quality of assistance provided to alleged victims of the crime will also be targeted in 2017 along with the promotion of readily accessible information on victim rights and the legal processes connected with trafficking in persons' cases.

It is intended for 2017 to see the continuation and solidifying of partnerships built in 2016, the creation of new partnerships, and the exploration of ways to make existing partnerships more effective and far reaching.

The Task Force also recognizes the importance of attaining increases in perpetrator charges and convictions as this would serve as a deterrent to potential perpetrators. It is pertinent for systems to be put in place to drastically reduce the probability of perpetrators going unpunished and to ensure that punishments meted out are commensurate with the gravity of the crime committed. It is the goal of the Task Force to make Guyana an unattractive territory for would-be traffickers.

The general public is invited and encouraged to become more educated on the subject of trafficking in persons and victim identification, share information with others, ensure the safety of yourselves and loved ones, be observant and report suspected cases to the TIP Hotline at 227-4083 or to the nearest Police Station. Together, let us put the 'right' back into 'rights'!